

Jesse Benton, September 23, 1824, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

MEMORANDUM ABOUT JACKSON'S DUELS.¹

¹ The handwriting is Jackson's. The date is only approximately correct. The memorandum is endorsed, "Rough draft of Facts against A. Wayne, Jesse Benton etc."

September 23, 1824(?).

It is a positive falshood instead of *Fact* that Genl Jackson after his antagonist had fallen exulted in his success in a strain of *disgusting profanity*, but instead of that extended to his fallen enemy who had boasted, that he would kill the genl, had practised shooting for upwards of three months and offered to bet \$1000 that he would kill him, all the humanity in his power by furnishing cordials, and wine etc., etc., which his antagonist sure of success was without—see George Brady's[?] certificate.

It is a positive falshood that Genl Jackson several years since in Nashville in a public Hotell fired off his pistol in a rencounter with Mr Benton regardless of the lives of the spectators. So far from this being the fact— *The Genl did not fire at all*. When the Genl entered the passage of the Hotell there was no person but Mr Thos H. Benton in it. his brother Jessee Benton who in an affair with Major Carrol, now Governor had disgraced himself by squatting and dogging; at the time the Genl entered the passage, entered the Barr Room, and as the Genl advanced along the passage in pursuit of Colo Benton Jessee Benton concealed behind the door of the Barr Room, Shot the Genl through the shoulder. The Genl still advancing on the Colo. who had retreated with a pistol in each hand out of the passage along the passway to the dining Room, Jessee Benton like a

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cowardly assassin came behind the Genl Shot him again in the left arm and broke it. The Genl fell and untill this there was no person but the Genl, Colo. Thos H Benton and his brother Jessee in the passage, Colo. Hays and Genl Coffee entered as Jessee Benton and his Brother was advancing upon the Genl then prostrate, Jessee with the third pistol, presenting at the head of the Genl. Colo. Benton was knocked down stairs by Genl Coffee, and Colo. Hays would have Killed the assassin Jessee Benton if his arm had not been arrested by Capt Hammons by request of the Genl.

It is a positive falshood that Genl Jackson has been either at a cockfight or sports of a similar nature for the last thirteen years. The fact as stated that Genl Jackson imprisoned, Judge Hall and disobeyed the mandate of Judge Fromentin, has been so often refuted and investigated that the public mind is at rest on those subjects—one *remark* ; Genl Jackson as Governor of Florida was exoficio the Supreme Judge of the Floridas, as well might chief Justice Marshal be found fault with for disregarding the mandate of a Justice of the peace. Calava was confined for a Contempt to the Court by the Supreme Judiciary of Florida and Fromentin who was the Council of Calava, Issued a something which he Called a writ of *Habeas Corpus* to release him. Suppose a man in your State imprisoned for a contempt of the Supreme court and a Subordinate Judge Issue his mandate for the delivery of the person would your Supreme court obey it.

The ballance of the peace is too contemptible to be noticed, except my vote in the Convention, I here send you a copy of that member of our Constitution.